

# THE SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

THE THREE HILLS

STEPS TO PARNASSUS

IMAGINARY SPEECHES

# THE SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

AND OTHER POEMS

BY

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TO W.  
IN THE TRENCHES

You live with Death: yet over there  
You breathe a somewhat cleaner air.

## NOTE

The "Christmas Hymn" appeared in *The New Statesman*, and some of the other verses in *The Herald*. "The Entente" is reprinted by special permission of the proprietors of *Punch*.

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# The Survival of the Fittest

(In Memoriam, L. C. and T.)

“Those like Mr. Strachey, of *The Spectator*, who say that without war the race would degenerate.”—*Star*, March 30, 1915.

THESE were my friends ;  
Strachey, you did not know  
them,

For they were simple, unaspiring  
men ;

No ordinary wind of chance could  
blow them

Within the range of your austerer  
ken.



## SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

They were most uninformed. They  
never even

—So ignorant and godless was their  
youth—

Heard you expound, with reverences  
to Heaven,

The elements of biologic truth.

Had they but had the privilege to  
cluster

Around Gamaliel's feet, they would  
have known

That hate and massacre also have  
their lustre,

And that man cannot live by Love  
alone.

## SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

But having no pillar of flame of your  
igniting

To guide by night, no pillar of  
cloud by day,

They thought War was an evil thing,  
and fighting

Filthy at best. So, thus deluded,  
they

Not seeing the war as a wise elimi-  
nation

Or a cleansing purge, or a whole-  
some exercise,

Went out with mingled loathing and  
elation

Only because there towered before  
their eyes

## SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

England, an immemorial crusader,  
A great dream-statue, seated and  
serene,  
Who had seen much blood, and sons  
who had betrayed her,  
But still shone out with hands and  
garments clean ;

Summoning now with an imperious  
message  
To one last fight that Europe  
should be free,  
Whom, though it meant a swift and  
bitter passage,  
They had to serve, for she served  
Liberty.

## SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

Romance and rhetoric! Yet with  
such nonsense nourished,  
They faced the guns and the dead  
and the rats and the rains,  
And all in a month, as summer  
waned, they perished;  
And they had clear eyes, strong  
bodies, and some brains.

. . . . .  
Strachey, these died. What need is  
there to mention

Anything more? What argument  
could give

A more conclusive proof of your  
contention?

Strachey, these died, and men like  
you still live.

# Christmas Hymn for Lambeth

*"Patriotism for Pauper Children.*—The Lambeth Guardians yesterday decided that, in order that the Poor Law school children may have an opportunity of appreciating the position of national affairs, the usual practice of allowing each child an egg for breakfast on Christmas morning be suspended this year. The Chairman of the Board remarked that it was better to let the children go without eggs than to give them shop eggs."—*The Times*, November 12, 1914.

"Lambeth is the site of the historic archiepiscopal palace."—*Guide to London*.

We are the Boys of the Bulldog Breed."—*Nos Omnes*.

## CHRISTMAS HYMN

**H**ARK! the Lambeth Guardians  
sing:

Glory to the new-born King;

Glory to the gun and sword

That will teach the German horde

In a way they'll not forget,

England still is England yet.

We are also sons of Drake

Who would strike for England's  
sake;

We shall help to win the day

In our more prosaic way.

None, we know, would dare suggest

That we have not done our best

## CHRISTMAS HYMN

In the past to educate  
Babes who sponge upon the State,  
To promote their civic sense  
And save the ratepayers expense.  
Should this education cease  
With the piping times of peace?  
No ; and we know how to teach  
    them  
In a way we hope will reach them.

Eggs have been upon occasion  
Instruments of moral suasion.  
We have brought from Scandinavia  
For the birthday of the Saviour,  
Eggs which taught our infant folk  
To detest the foreign yolk ;

## FOR LAMBETH

Eggs which would, we felt, remind  
them

They must take things as they find  
them,

And that little pauper hearts  
Are not even good in parts.

This régime, we think, suffices  
For the children's normal vices;  
But the want of public spirit—  
What return does this not merit?  
Loudly we in concert call  
They should have no eggs at all;  
Dock their food, and when they're  
starvin'  
They'll perhaps attend to Garvin.



## CHRISTMAS HYMN

Eggs is eggs, and eggs is dear,  
They shall have no eggs this year!

. . . . .

Guardians mine, so far so good  
This adjustment in the food;  
But, my Guardians, why, I beg,  
Go no further than an egg?  
If you'd have them not ignore  
All the grave effects of war,  
Sell their beds and let them freeze  
Like the Belgian refugees;  
Go the whole instructive hog,  
Shell the workhouse, burn and flog.

Flog a few and shoot a few—  
You will surely, if you do,

## FOR LAMBETH

Rouse them from their lethargy.  
Though the weaker ones may cry  
For dead fathers and dead mothers  
They will realize that others'  
Situation is much worse,  
And agree that war's a curse,  
And imbibe a novel zeal  
For their native commonweal.

Thus when they with clearer eyes  
Are persuaded to despise  
Luxury, and cease to treasure  
A vain and empty life of pleasure,  
Duly chastened they will sing:  
"Glory to the new-born King!  
I am sorry, Jesus dear,  
I don't deserve an egg this year;

## CHRISTMAS HYMN

Peace on earth and mercy mild,  
And Christ forgive a workhouse child."

. . . . .  
Then, my Guardians, you will go  
Home to Alexandra Row,  
Chatsworth Terrace or "St. Ann's,"  
"River View," "The Den," "The  
Manse,"

Justly proud of what you've done  
To repel the hated Hun,  
Hoping that it will afford  
Satisfaction to the Board;  
And round your Christmas table heavy  
With things (thank God, we've got  
a Navy !)

You will talk about the War  
And eat and eat until you snore.

# Arms and the Politician; or, The Pilgrims' Progress

Sub-Lieut. Sir L. G. Chiozza Money, M.P.  
to be Lieut., R.N.V.R.; Major (tempy.) Sir  
F. E. Smith, M.P., to be Lieut.-Col. (tempy.).  
—*Daily Press*.

**O**UR ears had grown familiar  
with  
“Mr. Money” and “Mr. Smith,”  
When, in the war's first anxious  
hour,  
Bellona, thy transmuting power,  
That we might stem and bring to a  
halt  
The onset of the Teuton foeman,

## ARMS AND THE POLITICIAN

Turned this into a breezy salt,  
And that into a bronzed yeoman.

Smith, "Captain Smith" we then did  
dub,

Chiozza was a naval sub;  
Smith at the Press Bureau cut  
capers,

Leo wrote letters to the papers;  
And Smith, who had a mild renown  
As an old military stager  
("Galloper" Smith of Portadown),  
Was very soon promoted Major.

Although he'd shaved and bought  
his kit,

Chiozza had to wait a bit,

## ARMS AND THE POLITICIAN

Finding his sea-legs in Whitehall;  
Meanwhile, that he might have some  
small

But reassuring proof that they  
Looked on him in a friendly light,  
The Government, on New Year's  
Day,  
Created him a New Year's knight.

A knighthood's something, for a  
start—

Chiozza took it in good part;  
He now was Warden of the Air,  
And did his duties nobly there;  
Yet still found ample time to address  
The House about our celibate  
shirkers,

## ARMS AND THE POLITICIAN

And urge that Carson should suppress

The organs of seditious workers.

For Carson now was head of the law  
(A man all traitors hold in awe),

And, grateful still for days not  
distant,

Had brought in Smith as his assistant ;

Yes, Major Smith, the battle-scarred  
(Why not a khaki wig and gown?),

Now kept, conjointly, watch and ward  
O'er the Law Office of the Crown.

O Bench ! O battle ! and O breeze !

O duplicate job and double fees !

## ARMS AND THE POLITICIAN

O Major Smith! O Smith, K.C.!

Right Honourable Sir F. E.!

This *was* a handful, to be sure;

Yet brave Sir L. did not look  
nervous;

He knew that he would yet secure

Like honours for the senior ser-  
vice.

The last achievements of the pair

Are still too recent an affair

For me to feel obliged to speak

Of what occurred the other week,

When the pale Kaiser gasped "Wow-  
wow!"

On seeing in his morning journal



## ARMS AND THE POLITICIAN

That Leo was lieutenant now

And Smith was now lieutenant-  
colonel.

'Tis plain the next reward must be  
Of Smith's vast versatility

A major-generalship or two;

O grim and complex thing to view!

Like Giant Two-Heads in the fable,

Or Briareus of classic myth,

The gallant and Right Honourable

Solicitor-Major-General Smith!

Well, if this most selective war  
Goes on for two or three years more,  
There surely can be little doubt  
Some day when the *Gazette* comes out

## ARMS AND THE POLITICIAN

In the promotions we shall see,  
And nobody will think it funny,  
Field-Marshal Viscount Smith, K.G.,  
And Admiral of the Fleet Lord  
Money.

Brothers, I shrink from dizzier flights—  
Yet, as I lie awake at nights,  
I sometimes nurse the hope sublime  
That we shall live to see the time  
When, gratefully (who knows? who  
knows?)

Obsequious mankind allots a  
Half hemisphere to kiss the toes  
Of Emperor Smith and King  
Chiozza.

## ARMS AND THE POLITICIAN

### ENVOI.

'Tis not for every one, I own,  
To rise from Wadham to a throne;  
Besides much energy and pluck  
That needs no ordinary luck.  
And he, perhaps, will be pronounced  
Still luckier, and still adept,  
Who, with superb resilience, bounced  
From cheap statistics to a sceptre.

But still the prospect's bright enough  
For strenuous men in silk and stuff;  
And Glory, good my brother scribe,  
No more eludes our inky tribe;  
And though, for average humdrum men,  
A crown is a beyond-belief bag,  
An admiral's pennant's on each pen,  
A marshal's baton in each brief-bag.

# Ballade

## Written in a Moment of Elation

On seeing that the foregoing poem had been answered by Sir Leo Money in *Verse*, in *Quite Fluent Stanzas*—stanzas which were, however, as disingenuous in their reasoning as they were (I admit) disarming in their amiability.

**I** DID not jest, I did not write  
for fun,

It was my view that though he  
did present

A less impressive target than the  
Hun

He ought not to escape admonish-  
ment.

## BALLADE

And, as he had no case for argument,  
ment,

I thought at most he'd breathe (in  
prose) a curse.

I had misjudged this cheerful Southern  
gent—

I drew Chiozza Money into verse.

He rhymed alone. No lyric web was  
spun

By that great expert in emolument;  
ment;

The warrior Smith stood songless by  
his gun.

But I shall not profess astonishment  
ment

## BALLADE

Apollo through Sir Frederick found  
no vent,

For poetry puts nothing in the  
purse.

Still, 1 in 2's two score and ten per  
cent—

I drew Chiozza Money into verse.

Time flies apace; my days will soon  
be done;

My quickening conscience bids me  
to repent

Of sins of both sorts, many and many  
a one;

For, briefly, this is my predicament:

## BALLADE

When I consider how my time was  
spent

I feel I could not well have spent  
it worse,

There is but one redeeming incident:  
I drew Chiozza Money into verse.

### ENVOI.

Prince, even I may have my monu-  
ment.

When I am underneath my sable  
herse,

Carve but these words, and I shall  
lie content:

“I drew Chiozza Money into verse.”

# Homœopathy

"A great outburst of popular indignation."—*Press, Passim, after the anti-German riots.*

"Trouncing the Teuton."—*Evening News, Headline.*

"We are heartily glad that the Russians burned Memel, and we hope that the Allies will burn a good many more German towns before this war is over."—*Morning Post, Leading Article.*

**W**E was in the "Blue Dragon,"  
Sid 'Awkins and me,  
When all of a sudden, "Here,  
Ernie," says he,  
"There are limits to what flesh and  
blood can endure;  
We must really protest against Prus-  
sian Kultur.



## HOMŒOPATHY

“There’s an alien butcher down  
Wapping High Street,  
The swine’s gone and asked me to  
pay for my meat;  
His father’s a Frenchman, his mother’s  
a Moor,  
But he’d do with a lesson in Prussian  
Kultur.”

So we off like a streak, and we pulled  
him from bed,  
And tore off his nightshirt and pum-  
melled his head,  
And rolled him along in the mud to  
secure  
He should quite grasp the meaning  
of Prussian Kultur.

## HOMŒOPATHY

O the way that we bashed 'im and  
hooted and hissed

Was a sight Lady Bathurst ought  
not to have missed;

For her organ *Die Post* gives a steady  
and sure

Support to the tenets of Prussian  
Kultur.

Then we emptied the shop in a white  
moral heat,

I got half a bullock, my wife some  
pigs' feet,

And some very nice tripe which she  
thought ought to cure

The Kaiser's devotion to Prussian  
Kultur.

## HOMŒOPATHY

Yes, even the coppers themselves  
took a part

With a cutlet apiece from Sid  
'Awkins's cart,

As a positive proof that they shared  
in our feeling,

And did not confuse moral protest  
with stealing.

Reassured by these kindly, encourag-  
ing cops,

We protested at each of the neigh-  
bouring shops,

Till at last at the end of our punitive  
week

They took us, *pro forma*, in front of  
the beak.

# HOMŒOPATHY

But he only remarked that no civilized  
nation

Could hope to withstand such extreme  
provocation.

“You’re discharged, for I know that  
your motives were pure—

You desired to protest against Prus-  
sian Kultur!”

## GRAND CHORUS

So fill up the cup and fill up the  
can!

A tradesman’s a Hun and a copper’s  
a man;

## HOMŒOPATHY

But O that each restaurateur were  
a brewer,  
For a healthy great thirst has our  
British Kultur.

# Bridging the Gulf; or, The Union of Classes

On Wednesday a bridge tournament was held at Sir — —'s lovely house in Park Lane in aid of Lady — —'s fund for providing pure milk for the poor. The spacious rooms on the first floor were filled with people.—*The Observer*, 1915.

## I

**S**IR ROGER TREPAN was a sensitive man, and very much moved by the war.

It made him aware of a number of things that he never had thought of before.

## BRIDGING THE GULF; OR,

He realized now he'd habitually left a  
rich man's obligations neglected,  
And he formed the conviction that  
this dereliction must immedi-  
ately be corrected.

"In my soul that was dead  
Comes a rushing of wind.  
Peccavi!" he said,

"I have sinned, I have  
sinned.

It's my duty," he said, "though  
these brigands

With their super-tax leave me  
half broke,

Now the country is solid, to  
brighten the squalid

Drab lives of less fortunate folk."

# THE UNION OF CLASSES

## II

Sir Roger Trepan was a resolute man,  
the grass grew not under his  
feet ;

When he once had decided the course  
he must take he never would  
own himself beat.

Aflame with his high patriotic resolve  
to show the morale of a bart.,  
He embraced a career of deliberate  
devotion to England, and so  
for a start

He ordered a lackey  
To telephone through  
To Jimmy and Jacky  
And Topsy van Boo



## BRIDGING THE GULF; OR,

To request them to join him at  
dinner

And then come and watch Tree  
from a box,

That the Leeds unemployed might  
no more be annoyed

By the heart-rending shortage of  
socks.

### III

Thenceforth—O the change, the miraculous change, from the thoughtless Sir Roger of old!—

With the strength of a saint and a statesman he ordered his most minute outlay of gold.

## THE UNION OF CLASSES

He could not be persuaded to buy a  
fur-coat, he would scarcely take  
tea with his aunt,

Without full satisfaction that each  
such transaction would benefit  
some one in want.

That His Majesty's lieges  
Should have a straight lead,  
He ran a few gee-gees  
To keep up the breed,  
And shot grouse for our poor  
wounded heroes  
And danced for the Belgian  
Red Cross,  
And took personal pains that our  
French friends' champagnes  
Should not be produced at a loss.

# BRIDGING THE GULF; OR,

## IV

All hail to the war for the blessings  
it brings! And how could one  
estimate which

Are the greater, the gains that accrue  
to the poor or the benefits  
reaped by the rich?

For the poor now perceive that the  
rich, whom of old they regarded  
with baseless dislike,

Though they *seem* to be merely amus-  
ing themselves may be helping  
all classes alike.

## THE UNION OF CLASSES

If they act as trustees  
For the money they spend  
The tangoest teas  
May bring fruit in the end,  
And game - preserves, cars, and  
casinos,  
Rightly handled, are sound as  
a bell,  
And polo at Ranelagh may be  
not merely manly  
But socially useful as well.

### V

And the rich. . . . Oh what prospects of service! What vistas of generous deeds!

## BRIDGING THE GULF; OR,

They will never neglect, now they've  
found out a way, their poor  
fellow-citizens' needs.

They'll rejoice now they feel that  
they need never more of the  
ancient class-feeling be fright-  
ened,

That they've learnt during war to  
distinguish 'twixt pleasures  
which are, and which are not,  
enlightened.

They have opened their eyes,  
Though at very long last,  
To their blind and unwise  
Lack of heart in the past,  
And at last seen the sense of  
the Gospel

## THE UNION OF CLASSES

That they should not be selfish,  
like hogs,  
That the Children may eat till  
they're round and replete,  
But they *must* leave some  
crumbs for the dogs.

# The Touch of Nature

"We want a Government which will stick at nothing which will win the war."—*Daily Mail*.

**A**T nothing, Harmsworth? Nothing?

Once again

One wants to plead, though one must  
plead in vain,

That you would condescend to clearer  
terms.

"Nothing" might mean, e.g., the use  
of germs.

## THE TOUCH OF NATURE

But that, no doubt, was not before  
your eyes,

For germs fly both ways, and one  
may surmise

You'd rather not, even if all else  
fail,

Wipe out *en masse* the readers of  
the *Mall*—

That special vileness would be in-  
convenient.

What you mean is that we have  
been too lenient

To neutrals who, with calculated  
force,

We might compel to steer a friendlier  
course,

To silly races, living at a distance,



## THE TOUCH OF NATURE

Whom we might sell, thus purchas-  
ing assistance,

That we have been too fond of paper  
fights,

Much, much too fond of other people's  
"rights"

And idiotic laws by land and sea  
That should not count against neces-  
sity.

But pause, proud lord, and think  
. . . did we resort

To any measure of whatever sort,  
To bullying, lying, wanton but-  
chery,

To every kind of paying atrocity,  
Might not seditious men, who have  
no sense,

## THE TOUCH OF NATURE

Urge that the two contending Gov-  
ernments

Should cease to chant unmeaning  
Hymns of Hate,

Lay down their arms, and just amal-  
gamate?

# The Higher Life for Clergymen

“Conscription is a step towards the Higher Life.”—*A Living Dean.*

“... he who made the earthquake and the  
storm,  
Perchance made battles too.”  
*A Dead Archbishop.*

**C**HRIST, when you hung upon  
that tree accurst,  
Bleeding, and bruised, and agonized  
by thirst,  
Mocked, tantalized, and spat on and  
defiled,

## THE HIGHER LIFE

On a near rising ground there stood  
and smiled,  
Serene behind those ravening Hebrew  
beasts,  
Annas and Caiaphas, the two high  
priests.

They felt uplifted, doubtless ; for their  
god

Was Moloch who was always pleased  
with blood.

Under all names this one red God  
they love,

And when the evidence appeared to  
prove

## THE HIGHER LIFE

The divine origin of Him who died,  
They thought 'twas Moloch they had  
crucified !

Nor will they change ; when the last  
worst war is done,  
And all mankind lies rotting in the  
sun,  
High on the highest pile of skulls  
will kneel,  
Thanking his god for that he did  
reveal  
This crowning proof of his great  
grace to man,  
A radiant, pink, well - nourished  
Anglican.

# EPIGRAMS

# I

## The Dilemma

**G**OD heard the embattled nations  
sing and shout

“Gott strafe England!” and “God  
save the King!”

God this, God that, and God the  
other thing—

“Good God!” said God, “I’ve got  
my work cut out.”

## II

### Lord Molasses

Lines written on reading that Lord Devonport had urged in the House of Lords that, in the interests of national economy, a considerable reduction should be made in the amount spent on Army pay and allowances.

**I**S it not strange that Lord  
Molasses

Should dare to preach to soldiers'  
wives,

And seek to rob the working-classes  
Of both their money and their  
lives?



## LORD MOLASSES

Oh no! A peer of new creation  
Broad-based on wholesale groceries  
Will still preserve an inclination  
For paring other people's cheese.

### III

## The Entente

"Turkey is our natural ally."—*General Bernhardt.*

"**H**OCH die Kultur! High  
Heaven speed the work!"

So cries the aspiring Teuton to the  
Turk.

Creation echoes with the glad re-  
frain,

Deep calls to deep, Armenia to  
Louvain.

## IV

### On Base Metals

(After Glasgow)

**I**F we were asked to make a  
choice

'Twixt two inflictions, both un-  
pleasant—

The ruinous sword, the raucous  
voice—

We almost feel as if, at present,

We should prefer the Iron Hand

Of Prussian, Saxon, or Bavarian,

Rather than any longer stand

The Brazen Tongue of this vul-  
garian.

## V

### The Trinity

Cry "God for Harry! England and Saint  
George!"—*Henry V.*

**C**USTOMS die hard in this our  
native land;

And still in Northern France, I  
understand,

Our gallant boys, as through the  
fray they forge,

Cry "God for Harmsworth! England  
and Lloyd George!"

## VI

### Inexperto Crede

Written on reading in Harmsworth's *Evening News* a vigorous denial of the truth of the statement that Honesty is the Best Policy.

**Y**OU may be accurate when you  
say

That habitual honesty does not pay;  
But there's still one point which  
leaves room for doubt,  
Which is: How the devil did *you*  
find out?

## VII

### A Tribute to the Memory of Richard Porson

**M**EN of sound English stock  
Conscription must shock,  
Men of every description  
Detest this conscription,  
Not one in five score,  
But ninety-five more,  
Almost all except Milner,  
And Milner's an Englishman.

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